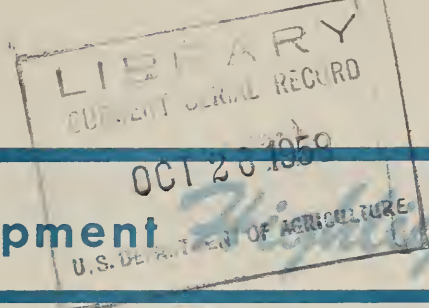


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Farm and Home Development

No. 5 -- October, 1959

Texas Adds Area Agents:

Farm and Home Development has proved its value, both in Texas and nationally, reports Extension Director John E. Hutchison. In 1957, over 1,200 Texas FHD families increased net cash farm income by \$935 over 1956. And last year, 1,373 families averaged a \$1,625 increase over 1957.

The central problem for the Texas Extension Service, says Director Hutchison, is to find ways of expanding the work with available resources. To this end, all extension workers have been given special training in management principles and in FHD techniques.

Further effort toward expansion of FHD was made this summer through the addition of area FHD specialists. These specialists--a man and a woman--have been assigned to the State's 12 extension districts. Their major job is to carry on a continuous FHD training program for agents in their district. When needed, they consult with agents on special problems of farm and ranch families.

What The Record Shows:

You'll be interested in the enclosed summary of FHD work from the statistical report of 1958 extension activities and accomplishments.

Agents reported working with 69,888 FHD families in 1958--8.6 percent more than in 1957 and 56 percent more than in 1955. Another 74,000 families were assisted with one or more major problems of farm and home planning.

Some 2,250 counties--73 percent of total "extension counties"--did some FHD work last year, a $4\frac{1}{2}$ percent drop from 1955. Percentage of FHD counties by regions: South, 86; North, 70; East, 55; West, 48.

Average number of families per county reporting was 31 in 1958--50 percent more than in 1955.

Of the 69,888 families, 18 percent had little or no previous contact with extension, 12 percent were just getting started in farming, 32 percent were in lower-one-third-gross-farm-income-group in the county, 19 percent were part-time farmers.

Only 7.6 percent of total extension agent man-hours was spent on FHD last year. This is equal to 83 families per agent devoting full-time to FHD and 3.2 man-days per family.

We're only scratching the surface nationally in FHD. We have the challenge. How can we better use our resources to meet this challenge?

Progress and Problems:

During the past few months members of our FHD task force have met with FHD steering groups in 26 States. They presented findings of the 10-State FHD Review and helped staff members think through the significance of the findings to their States.

Without exception, States visited feel FHD is making a vital contribution to extension work and to the development of better extension workers. Several States have started studies of their own as a means of strengthening FHD work.

Our staff came out of this experience with a deep conviction that FHD is effective in helping farm families shape their destiny. Discussions with State workers strengthens our feeling that many more families than we are now reaching greatly need FHD assistance.

Although it's difficult to summarize discussions with workers in 26 States, problems mentioned most often centered on:

1. Getting objectives and concepts understood and accepted.
2. Adequate training, including training in the educational vs. the service role of FHD.
3. Staff involvement and assignment.
4. Effective supervision.
5. Keeping competent personnel.
6. Effective information support, including motivation of families to want FHD help.
7. How to get more FHD work done.
8. Teaching decision making; particularly in solving family-centered problems.
9. Finding time to do FHD work.
10. Coordinating FHD with overall county program.

We plan to discuss these problems and what States are doing to solve them in future issues of this newsletter.

FHD Visuals:

Latest FHD slide stories to come to our attention are from Indiana. Allen County FHD Agent Bob Taylor has prepared two excellent sets of slides for telling and selling FHD.

One set of 9 slides shows the managerial process. Slide one shows the location of FHD families. Slide two depicts an "English maze." Here Taylor explains how families often stumble blindly to reach a goal unless they understand and use the management process. Remaining slides explain how FHD helps families manage resources to attain family goals.

The second set--91 slides--shows FHD in action in the county. Case histories and before and after pictures graphically tell the story.

Good visual aids have impact. They're often the clincher in making a sale. We need to make greater use of them in telling the FHD story. Copies of the 40-frame FES filmstrip on FHD are still available from Photo Lab., Inc., 3825 Georgia Ave., N. W., Washington, 11, D. C. for \$6 per copy. Preview copies are available on loan from us.

Using Records:

Records have many uses. Among these are their value in motivating families to do a better job by comparing their operations with their neighbors. We're impressed with the many ways agents make use of records for this purpose.

In Wisconsin, for example, Grant County Agents Bernard McGinley and Sara Steele use local records in their monthly FHD newsletter. A recent issue says in part:

"Dear Friends--This month we've enclosed some information compiled from the many farm records we have worked with in the past few months. The information may seem a little bulky but we hope you will use it to get some ideas as to where your farming program is at the present time and how it can be improved.....

"Miss Steele has included information from the many fine home records you ladies are keeping. I'm sure many of you are using these records in both your home and overall farm planning."

Agents Tour BF Farms:

More than a thousand county agricultural agents took a first-hand look at Kansas and Missouri's Balanced Farming program last month. Occasion was the national Agents' Association meeting in Kansas City.

Before the tour, agents were given a well-illustrated brochure containing a case history of each farm and family visited. They were also told of the development of BF in the two States and how it's carried on. Agents then broke into four groups to visit farms. Each group visited two farms. More than 30 busses were required for the tour. Perhaps you could get a copy of the brochure of case histories from Missouri.

FHD Newsletters:

Hats off to Michigan for the continual fine job they do in preparing their FHD newsletter. Covering a variety of topics, the newsletter is designed to train, motivate, recognize, and share developments and information of interest to agents.

The August issue for, example, included a page of news tidbits, case histories of FHD work in two counties, and a story on what FHD has done for extension work by another county agent.

Measuring Agent Training:

As a summer school assignment, Miss Hallene Price of Oregon developed an excellent guide for determining the adequacy of agent training. The 16-page guide provides check sheets and other evaluation devices. Copies are available from Dr. Mary Louise Collings of our staff.

From Alabama:

Opportunities for Profit on Your Farm, Alabama Progress Report Series 74, provides a useful means of comparing operations on a given farm with standards for the State. The title suggests that most every farm family can improve income by locating and correcting the weak spots in their operations.

Standards used are based on a business analysis of 252 FHD farms. The underlying thesis is the importance of volume, labor efficiency and production rates; of selection and combination of enterprises for maximum farm profits.

Also new in Alabama is a revised farm business summary to be used in summarizing and analyzing 1959 records of FHD cooperators.

On-the-Job Training:

Believing that nothing takes the place of experience--Nebraska includes six weeks of on-the-job training in its FHD training program. New FHD agents work with an experienced FHD agent before being assigned to a county.

As part of their training, agents use a recently developed training guide. The guide includes a check sheet for evaluating farm and home visits. You may be able to get a copy from Phil Sutton.

Outlook Aid:

Should I Adjust Hog Production Now? is the title of a recent statement prepared by FES agricultural economics and livestock production specialists. The 8-page mimeographed report illustrates both the application of Outlook information to FHD and the value of organizing information so that it accents alternatives. Designed to highlight the critical hog situation, copies have been sent to specialists concerned.

Enclosure